

Embrace

by Psychomorph

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Summary: A pointless peice of fluff that wouldn't leave me alone.

Embrace

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>
center(Adrian)/center

>
I looked deep into his eyes. His main eyes. Eyes so different from mine, that shocking emerald green, yet conveying that same fragile hope and painfull longing that I felt. I longed for him to embrace me. Not buddy hugs like the others, but a true embrace, holding tight, clinging to one another, proof of the other's continued existence.

>
We had just survived our closest brush with death. Even the first mission could not compare with this. I needed to reach out and touch them, touch my friends to make sure this wasn't the final torture in my life.

>
Marco was dancing around like a demented fool. Jake was laughing and swinging Cassie around. Rachel stood silently, as did Tobias on his branch, watching the setting sun.

>
Aximilli stood there. Ignoring all the warnings my war weary mind called out, I embraced him, holding him tightly to me. I didn't know what to expect. A hug, being shoved away and looked at oddly? Instead, he returned the embrace as fiercly as I did.

>
It felt right, standing there. I just held on to him. It was all I needed.

>
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>
Lator, Aximilli came over to my apartment. Mrs. and Mr. O'Hara let him in with minimal questions.

>
"So what story did you tell them to be let in?"

>
"I told them I was a friend. They are very protective of you."

>
"Yeah, well, they're my family now. They and the Animorphs."

>
"And me?"

>
I didn't want to answer that. I didn't want to tell him just

how deeply I felt about him. Aximilli was an Andalite, the first of his kind ever to spend such a prolonged amount of time on Earth. I was a human, a creature vastly different from him. Yet why did my heart feel such pangs when I saw him being attacked down in the Yeerk pool? Why did I want the impossible to happen, something beyond the bittersweet embrace, beyond the aching carress?

>
"I care about you," I said simply. I hugged him. I don't know why, but it just felt right.

>
He pulled me closer. I could feel his heartbeat, faster than it should have been. Did I imagine the longing I saw in his eyes? My lips brushed his in a butterflywind touch. I kissed him.

>
Aximilli had no way to know just what a kiss was or even what it meant. Perhaps it was the instincts of his human morph. He returned the kiss in full. My heart thudded just as loud as his did. The kiss deepened. I held on to him all the more fiercely, breathing raggedly.

>
Later, whether it was seconds or minutes, he pulled away.

>
"I must leave now."

>
"Aximilli," I whispered in a voice low enough not to be overheard by my foster parents, "why? Why are you going?"

>
"I must think about something. Something very important."

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center-----/center

>
center(Aximilli)/center

>
I was not lying when I said I had something important to think about. I cared about Adrian. More than I thought before. Much more. The gesture in her home was closer to her than to anyone else I had known in my life. Elfangor once told me that when I found my mate, I would know. What worried me was that there were fewer and fewer doubts in my mind when I thought of Adrian that way.

>
That thought in itself should have been more than efficient to destroy any threat of getting closer to her in that way. Yet still, there came the longing. I would think of her, fierce battle morph, haunted grey eyes. So similar to an Andalite's and at the same time, so alien. I cared about her.

>
The longing wasn't just emotional. I wanted to hold her tightly and never let go. A scientist once said that prolonged absence from one's own kind can lead to abnormalities. Identifying with, empathy with another species to the extent it was insanity. I didn't doubt my sanity. Proof I was sane or insane?

>
I didn't expect to see her near the pool of water that night. Her jacket, shorts, pack, and heavy artificial hooves lay near the edge of the water. Adrian herself was swimming in the water. Andalites can swim with some difficulty. Most exposure to water is just wading. It was fascinating to watch her swim to the deep end of the pool.

>
Adrian was dressed only in her morphing outfit. In the shadows of the tree that overlooked the pool, only her middriff above the surface of the water, her wet hair slicked back, she almost looked like an Andalite. Almost.

>
Perhaps someday when the war was over, she could perform a Frolics Maneuver and obtain a unique Andalite morph. Perhaps become a nothlit.... No. That would be too much to ask of her. Far too much. Even if she did return my feelings.

>
That was the worst part about this: the doubt. Not knowing if she felt the same way I did. Not knowing if she would accept me in the way I hoped or turn away in fear. Was not knowing worse than knowing? Was the fear of her disgust worth the chance that maybe she felt the same way I did? Or was it just insanity to begin with?

>
The moonlight reflected off the water in such a way that Adrian looked more like an ancient water spirit might in Earth legend than a mere human. She was beautiful. Even to my eyes, she was beautiful. Strange, alien, but beautiful.

>
I walked out to the waters.

>
center-----/center

>
center(Adrian)/center

>
 Adrian?

>
"Aximilli? What are you doing out here?"

>
 I was walking. I did not expect to see you.

>
"Neither did I." I waded out of the thick water sluggishly and wrung my hair out. Again I wanted to hold him close. Apparently, he did too. Aximilli was hugging me fiercely. Nothing was said, just that one single moment.

>
A single tear spilled out of the corner of my eye. A single tear. A single tear was the only response, the only expression I could bear at the time.

>
center-----/center

>
center(Aximilli)/center

>
The words were spoken before I could even think of retracting them.

>
 I love you.

>
If Adrian were not stunned, I was. I knew I cared about her, knew that my feelings were much stronger than they should have been or that I would admit to myself, but love?

>
"I return that love in full, Aximilli-Esgarrouth-Isthil," she whispered in a voice almost too low to be heard.

>
My hearts quivered. Never did I expect this. Never. Never. A close friendship, utter rejection, but not this. Never.

>
But then, my life has been almost anything but the expected.

>
I loved her.

>
She returned that love.

>
If this is insanity, then so it is, let it be as such. If it was insanity stemming from isolation from my people, then so be it. Then so be it.

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center-----/center

>
center(Adrian)/center

>
I almost asked him to repeat what he said. Almost. I didn't know what else to say, to do. So I just held on to him, afraid to let go, afraid it was nothing but a dream. A dream I didn't want to wake up from if it was as such.

>
"I can't believe this. I thought-- I thought I was the only one who felt that way. I, that is...." He waited patiently. "Thanks," I finally said. "Thanks."

>
 What does the gesture of touching mouths together signify?

>
"It's called a kiss. It's something humans do to show love or affection."

>
 It is almost similar to an Andalite gesture of the same meaning. Gently, he placed a hand upon my cheek. His fingers spread outward. So simple, yet so strong.

>
I repeated the gesture.

>
centerFINIS/center

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file.